

Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel

The Scientific and Technical Advisory Panel, administered by UNEP, advises the Global Environment Facility
(Version 5)

STAP Scientific and Technical screening of the Project Identification Form (PIF)

Date of screening: October 04, 2013

Screener: Guadalupe Duron

Panel member validation by: Annette Cowie
Consultant(s):

I. PIF Information *(Copied from the PIF)*

FULL SIZE PROJECT GEF TRUST FUND

GEF PROJECT ID: 5406

PROJECT DURATION : 5

COUNTRIES : Gambia

PROJECT TITLE: Community-Based Sustainable Dryland Forest Management

GEF AGENCIES: FAO

OTHER EXECUTING PARTNERS: Department of Forestry, Ministry of Forestry and the Environment

GEF FOCAL AREA: Land Degradation

II. STAP Advisory Response *(see table below for explanation)*

Based on this PIF screening, STAP's advisory response to the GEF Secretariat and GEF Agency(ies):
Consent

III. Further guidance from STAP

STAP acknowledges FAO's proposal on "Community-based sustainable dryland forest management" in Gambia. The proposal seeks to reduce forest degradation by strengthening policies and institutional frameworks on community forest management, and through sustainable forest management techniques. STAP is pleased to see the proposal will attempt to implement a comprehensive framework that brings together sectors influencing the sustainability of the dryland forests in Gambia.

To strengthen the proposal further, STAP believes the following recommendations need to be addressed during the development of the proposal.

1. It would be useful to describe further the forest ecosystem (including tree species) in the target areas by providing data (If data is not available, it is important to add this aspect in the proposal.). Similarly, STAP recommends detailing further the socio-economic features of the targeted communities. STAP encourages FAO to provide disaggregated data by gender where available, so this information can better target the needs of women and men as forest users. Additionally, STAP suggests adding climate change data (trends or projections) on Gambia. Combined, this information can help contextualize the global environmental challenges described in the proposal, as well as strengthen the components so that climate change risks and its impacts on forest ecosystems and communities are imbedded throughout the design of the project.
2. In component 1, STAP notes the proposal will address "...challenges resulting from non-forestry sectors that influence dryland forests." It would be useful to define further these challenges in the full proposal by identifying comprehensively the drivers and causes of forest degradation, and how the project intends to address them.
3. In component 2, STAP recommends for FAO to consider STAP's advisory document "The Evidence Base for Community Forest Management as a Mechanism for Supplying Global Environmental Benefits and Improving Local Welfare". The document summarizes the evidence base of the effectiveness of community forest management in generating global environmental benefits and improving livelihoods. In particular, STAP recommends for FAO to note the following key messages when developing the proposal.
 - a. "There are five main threats that possibly undermine the effectiveness of community forest management (CFM). STAP recommends for the project components to describe design choices to minimize these threats, and identify indicators that allow monitoring the importance of these threats.

- b. Evidence demonstrates weak causal links between community forest management and the environmental or socio-economic impacts. STAP recommends describing in detail the pathways through which community forest management is believed to result in additional environmental, and perhaps socioeconomic, outcomes (i.e. the GEF evaluation office's "theory of change").
- c. The limited evidence base should encourage project design that contributes to the knowledge base – that is, designed in a way that demonstrate clearly the environmental and socioeconomic impacts of community forest management projects. STAP recommends applying a design whereby there is a selection of non-CFM community forests that have similar baseline (pre-CFM project) trends and characteristics to CFM community forests and to monitor a few outcome indicators at both CFM and non-CFM sites over the project period."

These recommendations are detailed further in the STAP advisory document on community forest management, which can be downloaded from the STAP website – www.stapgef.org

4. Under global environmental benefits and incremental reasoning, STAP recommends defining the methodology that will be used to estimate and monitor carbon stock changes from forests. Currently, this information is not included in the proposal, and it is relevant for monitoring the project's global environmental outcomes. Several methodologies are available including FAO's EX-ACT, and the UNEP/GEF carbon benefits project methodology.

Additionally, if the proposal aims to contribute to additional global environmental benefits besides carbon, STAP recommends identifying indicators for these benefits. If carbon is the only intended global environmental benefit arising from sustainable forest management/sustainable land management activities, STAP suggests clarifying this in the full proposal. Currently, this aspect is not clear in the proposal.

5. STAP would like to bring to the attention of the project proponents an initiative in which indigenous landowners are earning carbon credits through early dry season burning of savannas, in Australia. The initiative is described here: <http://www.nailsma.org.au/hub/programs/carbon-project> There may be potential to market carbon credits in a similar manner, though this would require acceptance of the concept and the methodology by a scheme to which Gambia has access. The carbon accountings approach may be useful to this project: <http://www.climatechange.gov.au/reducing-carbon/carbon-farming-initiative/methodologies/methodology-determinations/savanna-burning>

<i>STAP advisory response</i>	<i>Brief explanation of advisory response and action proposed</i>
1. Consent	STAP acknowledges that on scientific or technical grounds the concept has merit. However, STAP may state its views on the concept emphasizing any issues where the project could be improved. Follow up: The GEF Agency is invited to approach STAP for advice during the development of the project prior to submission of the final document for CEO endorsement.
2. Minor revision required.	STAP has identified specific scientific or technical challenges, omissions or opportunities that should be addressed by the project proponents during project development. Follow up: One or more options are open to STAP and the GEF Agency: (i) GEF Agency should discuss the issues with STAP to clarify them and possible solutions. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the GEF Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP's recommended actions.
3. Major revision required	STAP has identified significant scientific or technical challenges or omissions in the PIF and recommends significant improvements to project design. Follow-up: (i) The Agency should request that the project undergo a STAP review prior to CEO endorsement, at a point in time when the particular scientific or technical issue is sufficiently developed to be reviewed, or as agreed between the Agency and STAP. (ii) In its request for CEO endorsement, the Agency will report on actions taken in response to STAP concerns.